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THREE REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS

Capt.-Lieut. William F., Capt. James and
"Private" James Gaines.

(Banner, October 20, 1920.)

Historians and descendants of "Capt. James Gaines" (Virginia and Tennessee) and "Capt.-Lieut. William Fleming Gaines" (Virginia), soldiers of the Revolutionary War, have confused, it seems to appear, the military "records" of the two men, caused largely, if not entirely, by both being designated "captain," born in Virginia, and in the same war.

"Captain" James Gaines (born in Culpepper County) led the Virginia militia (Volunteers), was wounded at the battle of Guilford Courthouse in March, 1781. (See War Department, and Heitman Histories, he an expert of that department.)

There appears to be no "record" showing that "Captain" James was in the "artillery," but the "records" and history clearly show "Capt.-Lieut" William F. Gaines was in the "Continental Artillery" and for "six years" under Capt. Charley Harrison with General Washington in the East. (See Heitman's Books and Virginia Military Land Warrant No. 456 to "William Fleming Gaines, Captain-Lieutenant, artillery term, six years, issued April 28, 1783," and Kentucky Land Office records, War Department, and Lossing's Pict. Field Book of Revolution, pages 494-5, where he is indexed, "Gaines, Captain, at Eutaw Springs;" Gibb's History of American Revolution, 146; McGrady's "South Carolina in the Revolution, 1780-1783.")

Each of these historians speak of the brilliant work "Captain" and "Captain-Lieutenant William Fleming Gaines" did with his "artillery" at the battle of Eutaw Springs. A few quotations follow:

"Battle of Eutaw Springs:

"At the commencement two three-pounders under Capt.-Lieut. Gaines advanced with the front line. . . . The enemy's cannon swept the road with destructive fire and until Colonel Williams brought up the artillery of Gaines in full gallop and returned their fire with severe effect."

"The British attack soon yielded and fell back to their lines, dividing right and left and taking position on the flanks. At this moment one of the British pieces was disabled, and both of Gaines' three-pounders were dismounted. . . . A great number fell, and the remainder were thrown into confusion. Majorbanks perceived this, sallied out, seized the two pieces, and ran them under the window of the house. One of these was soon rescued by Lieutenant Gaines, and remained with the Americans a trophy of victory." Lossing, supra, indexed (as stated) "Gaines, Captain, at Eutaw Springs."

Gibbs says: "The three-pounders under Capt.-Lieut. Gaines moved in the road with the first line, which was equally distant to the right and left of it."

McGrady, at page 448, states: "Two three-pounders under Captain Gaines moved in the road with the first line equally distant to the right and left," and is indexed thus: "Gaines, Capt. William Fleming Gaines, of Virginia, takes part in the battle of Eutaw Springs."

In the "Life, Letters, and Papers of Gen. Nathaniel Greene," his nephew, G. W. Green, speaks of the "artillery"

work, at the battle of Eutaw Springs, of Captain-Lieutenant Gaines (if the writer hereof mistakes not).

In no known "record" does it appear that "Captain Gaines" or "Capt. James Gaines" and his "volunteer militia" (or without them) was in this great Eutaw Springs battle, fought September, 1781. General Greene ~~had~~ ^{had} issued to "Colonel Charles Harrison, Continental Army" (under whom Capt.-Lieut. William F. Gaines served) a letter from "High Hills of Santee" (Eutaw Section), and speaks of "Captain Gaines' 'artillery' work and Captain Ragsdale, of Harrison's artillery."

This letter, by using the term "Captain Gaines," has caused descendants of "Capt. James Gaines" to claim that he was the "Captain Gaines" to whom General Greene refers in this letter.

Virginia Magazine of History and Genealogy (12-203-4) reads as follows:

"Capt. James Gaines was a soldier and a statesman, much honored in North Carolina, where he settled (Surry County) soon after the Revolution, and died in Sullivan County, Tenn."

"He was a nephew of Judge Edmund Pendleton. His father, William Gaines, married Isabella Pendleton (and Mary, her sister, married James Gaines, a brother of William). Gen. Edmund P. Gaines was the son of this Capt. James Gaines, who (says 'Daring Deeds of American Generals'), in the latter part of the Revolution, commanded a company of volunteers and did a good service in that capacity. At the close of the war he (Capt. James Gaines) removed to the northwest border of North Carolina. He represented the county (Surry) in which he resided in the Legislature of that State, and was afterwards a member of the convention which rejected the Federal Constitution. Like many of the most patriotic citizens of Virginia, North Carolina, and other States, he was at first opposed to that instrument, but was won over by the adoption of the Bill of Rights, and voted in its favor."

He died in 1810, says Heitman; but others, some of his descendants, say he died at a later date, and that his remains were buried at Newport, Tenn.

"Private" James Gaines (Virginia and North Carolina). It also appears that the military "record" in the independence war of another "James Gaines," of Culpepper, father, Henry, a "private" all the time, is also mixed with the record of "Capt." James Gaines, of Culpepper. The "records" (Pension Office, War Department, and North Carolina records) show that he was with Washington on the Delaware and with Lafayette in the South and at Yorktown, and after the war ended moved to North Carolina, and there married Cary Kidd (evidently second marriage), was pensioned, and died (1852) in Moore County, N. C.; and that "three of his older brothers, with him at Yorktown, had long since gone West."

"Capt." James Gaines died many years before. His last wife was a Strother.

Thus, plainly, without more, it appears "Private" James, of Culpepper County, Va., and Moore County, N. C., and "Capt. James Gaines," of Culpepper County, Va.; Surry County, N. C.; and Sullivan County, Tenn., were two different men, and that "Capt. and Capt. Lieut. William Fleming Gaines" was a third man.

JOHN W. GAINES.

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